WOMEN IN PASTORAL MINISTRY SURVEY

Mennonite Church USA--1992-2005

This survey includes both objective (simply circling an answer number) and subjective questions. If the space provided is not adequate feel free to submit your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Additional comments to any of the questions are welcome.

SECTION I: PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

1. Name (optional): _____

2. Age: _____ 3. Race: _____ 4. Citizenship: _____

5. In what denomination were you raised: _____

6. Current denominational affiliation: _____

7. How many years (if any) have you served as pastor in a congregation? _____

8. In how many different congregations have you have served? _____

9. Please check in which roles you have served (check all that apply):
   - ___ Lead pastor
   - ___ Associate/Assistant pastor
   - ___ Co-pastor with spouse
   - ___ Co-pastor with person other than spouse
   - ___ Interim pastor
   - ___ Lay Minister
   - ___ Minister/Director of Education/Youth/Worship/Music
   - ___ Other---please specify: _____

10. In what role are you currently serving? (If you are not currently serving as a pastor in a congregation, please indicate what your current occupation is.)

SECTION II: CALL TO MINISTRY

11. At what age did you first consider a career in ministry? _____

12. Briefly describe your journey into ministry:

13. How important were each of the following in your decision to pursue the ministry as a career?

	Quite Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Relevant or Don't Know
1 Members of your family	1	2	3	4
2 Minister(s) of the church you attended	1	2	3	4
3 Seminary faculty	1	2	3	4
4 Women pastors	1	2	3	4
5 Conference minister	1	2	3	4
6 Intern supervisor	1	2	3	4
7 Inner call	1	2	3	4
8. College Faculty/Staff	1	2	3	4
9. Friends or congregational members	1	2	3	4
10. Other	1	2	3	4

Please specify: _____

14. What influenced you most in your decision to pursue (or not to pursue) pastoral ministry?

15. Did anyone discourage you from entering pastoral ministry? If yes, please explain.

16. Did you experience any doubts regarding entering pastoral ministry? What were they about? Please describe.

17. How strong were these doubts? (Please circle one)

1	3	5
Not strong at all Only passing fears		Very strong— almost led me not to pursue ministry

SECTION III: SEMINARY EXPERIENCE

18. Have you attended seminary? 1 Yes 2 No
If "No," please skip to Section IV of the questionnaire.

19. At what age did you enter seminary? _____

20. When did you decide to enter seminary?
1 before college
2 during college
3 after college

21. How soon after graduation from seminary did you find a pastoral placement?
    1 already in pastoral assignment while in seminary
    2. already received placement before graduation
    3. less than 6 months
    4. 6 months to one year
    5. 1-2 years
    6. 2-3 years
    7. Have never served in a pastoral assignment
    8. Other (please specify)_____

SECTION IV: FIRST PLACEMENT

If you have never served as a pastor in a congregation, please skip to Section VI.

22. Please describe how you obtained your first placement. (For example, did you obtain your first placement through formal channels, utilizing the calling/ministerial listing service of the denomination, or through informal channels/networking, such as a friend or relative who was associated with the congregation?)

23. Were you called from within the congregation of which you were a member to serve in a pastoral capacity? 1 Yes 2 No
    If yes, how did that process take place?

24. Before being hired in your first placement, how many different church options were you considering?
    _____

25. In your first placement, were you employed:
    1 full-time 2 part-time 3 worked without pay

26. Were you the first woman the church hired for this position? 1 Yes 2 No

27. Did the church experience internal strife because you were called? 1 Yes 2 No
    If so, did the internal conflict subside after placement? Explain.

28. Did any persons leave the church as a result of your being called? 1 Yes 2 No

29. What sorts of criticism and theological questions concerning women in ministry have you faced?

    How have you handled these criticisms/questions?

30. Did the congregation call another woman when you left?
    1 Yes 2 No 3 Not Applicable (still in first placement)

SECTION V: SECOND PLACEMENT

If you have not served in more than one church, please skip to the next section

31. How many years did you serve in your first placement? _____

32. What factors influenced your choice to make a move to a second placement? (Circle all that apply)
    A. Family/Spouse
    B. Desire for increased responsibility
    C. Desire for changed role
    D. Conflicts within the congregation
    E. Learned of an attractive opening
    F. Need/desire for geographic change
    G. Other (please specify: _____)

33. How soon after deciding that a move was desired did you find a second pastoral placement that met your needs?
    1 less than 6 months
    2 6 months to one year
    3 1-2 years
    4 2-3 years
    5 Other (please specify)_____

34. Did your second placement involve a significant change in pastoral responsibilities?
    1. an increase in responsibilities
    2. a decrease in responsibilities
    3. no change

SECTION VI: CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

35. If you are not currently serving as a pastor in a congregation, please explain your reasons for choosing to serve in a different setting.

For those who currently are serving a congregation, please answer the following questions in terms of the congregation you are presently serving. All others should skip to Section VII.

36. Are you employed:
    Full-time ¾ time half-time Less than ½ time

    If you are in a less than fulltime pastorate, please indicate the reasons why this is the case:

37. Do you also have paid work outside the congregation?
    1. No
    2. Yes-- How many hours weekly?

    What is the nature of this work?

38. How many years have you served as a pastor in your current congregation? _____

39. What proportion of the members of your congregation are 50 and over?
    1. 2/3 or more
    2. about half
    3. less than one third

40. What proportion of the members of your congregation are middle or upper class?
    1. 2/3 or more
    2. about half
    3. less than one third

41. How would you characterize the dominant theological position of the majority of your congregation?
    1. very conservative
    2. moderately conservative
    3. moderately liberal
    4. very liberal
    5. mixed/neither
    6. other (please explain): _____

42. How satisfied are you with your pastoral role in the congregation?
    1. very satisfied
    2. satisfied
    3. mixed, both satisfied and frustrated
    4. dissatisfied
    5. very dissatisfied and frustrated

43. How does/did your pastorate in this congregation compare with past pastoral experience?
    1. Better
    2. Worse
    3. About the same
    4. Not applicable – this is my first congregation experience

44. Should you desire another pastoral position, how easy do you anticipate that it would be to find?
    1. very easy
    2. somewhat easy
    3. somewhat difficult
    4. very difficult

45. Do you feel you have adequate information about all church related vacancies in which you might be interested? 1 Yes 2 No

46. Please comment on positive or negative experiences using the calling system/ministerial listing service of your denomination?

SECTION VII: YOUR MINISTRY

47. On the following scale from one to ten, circle one number indicating where you rate your leadership style between "visionary" and "maintainer"

(Visionary)									(Maintainer)
I enjoy envisioning future goals for the congregation/dreaming about new possibilities									I enjoy carrying out already established goals
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

48. On the following scale from one to ten, circle one number indicating your preferred decision making style between "maintaining the principle" and "maintaining the relationship."

(Maintaining Principle)									(Maintaining Relationship)
I make decisions based on the principle of the issue at hand.									I make decisions based on the desire to maintain harmony in the relationship.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

49. The following statements deal with various facets of pastoral work. For each item, please circle the number on the scale from 0 to 5 which indicates how much each statement is <u>*like you*</u>.
For those no longer serving in pastoral ministry, please answer these items with your most recent experience pastoring a congregation in mind.
Those who have never served in pastoral ministry can skip to Section IX.

0	1	2	3	4	5
not like me at all	only the slightest bit like me	a bit more like me	more yet like me	considerably like me but not completely	very much like me

a. I believe that only ordained clergy can properly administer the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion.

0 1 2 3 4 5

b. I am uncomfortable when people open up and share their innermost feelings with me.

0 1 2 3 4 5

c. When dealing with difficult decisions in the church, it is usually my "gut feeling" that serves me best.

0	1	2	3	4	5
not like me at all	only the slightest bit like me	a bit more like me	more yet like me	considerably like me but not completely	very much like me

d. My ministry is effective, because God is within me as well as beyond me.

0 1 2 3 4 5

e. There is no substitute for rational, analytical thought for solving congregational problems.

0 1 2 3 4 5

f. I find that I must be a skilled and energetic fund raiser to prod congregational members to give enough money to keep the church alive.

0 1 2 3 4 5

g. I would really feel successful as a minister if I were serving a larger church.

0 1 2 3 4 5

h. Sometimes I have to drag my congregation kicking and screaming in the direction I think the church ought to go.

0 1 2 3 4 5

i. I often will bend church rules if they don't meet the needs of the congregation.

0 1 2 3 4 5

j. I think today's church members need to hear the correct position on ethical issues delivered from the pulpit.

0 1 2 3 4 5

k. My primary concern in concrete moral choices is applying the best rules for conducting human life.

0 1 2 3 4 5

l. I believe that lay people, not the clergy, should decide the direction in which the church will go.

0 1 2 3 4 5

m. When I'm really sure about what the congregation should do, I try hard to get them to take my advice.

0	1	2	3	4	5
not like me at all	only the slightest bit like me	a bit more like me	more yet like me	considerably like me but not completely	very much like me

n. I think it is more important to do the work of the church efficiently than to have a lot of people involved in it.

0 1 2 3 4 5

o. I think that democratic decision making is a poor basis for local church policy.

0 1 2 3 4 5

p. I don't think congregations can function very well without guidance from the clergy.

0 1 2 3 4 5

q. I feel uncomfortable in the absence of clear organizational guidelines for ongoing church programs.

0 1 2 3 4 5

r. One of my ministry goals is to enhance the power my members have in the mission and operation of their local congregation.

0 1 2 3 4 5

s. My ministry will be most successful if I can lead my congregation to get along without me.

0 1 2 3 4 5

t. It is more important to me to maintain congregational solidarity than to follow denominational policy.

0 1 2 3 4 5

u. A collaborative leadership style works best for me in working with the congregation.

0 1 2 3 4 5

v. If I have any power in my congregation, it is based simply on the trust I have earned from the people.

0 1 2 3 4 5

50. Which of these factors most influenced the development of your particular leadership style? (For all that you circle, please rank in order of significance: 1 for most significant, 2 for the second most significant, etc.)

		Ranking
1	modeled for me by male pastors	_____
2	modeled for me by female pastors	_____
3	this is the kind of leader my congregation expected of me	_____
4	I was taught this style at seminary	_____
5	Other (please describe)	_____

51. Please respond to each of the following statements from your experience in the last year or your most recent experience pastoring a congregation:

	Usually	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
a. I have felt accepted, liked and appreciated by most members of this congregation	1	2	3	4
b. I have had trouble with one or more lay leaders in the congregation.	1	2	3	4
c. I was able to maintain a separation between my ministerial duties and my private life.	1	2	3	4
d. I felt lonely and isolated.	1	2	3	4
e. I had sufficient money to live comfortably.	1	2	3	4
f. I felt bored and frustrated by the limits of this job, resources or people.	1	2	3	4
g. I felt physically healthy and energetic.	1	2	3	4
h. I felt I was really accomplishing things in my ministry.	1	2	3	4
i. I thought seriously about leaving the pastoral ministry for some other kind of work.	1	2	3	4
j. I have experienced burnout.	1	2	3	4

52. Have you ever experienced sexual harassment in the congregation(s) where you have served as pastor? 1 Yes 2 No

a. If yes, by whom? (circle all that apply)
   - Congregational members
   - Other pastoral staff
   - Other church staff (i.e. custodian, secretary)
   - Pastoral colleagues outside the congregation
   - Other (please describe)

b. For each incident, please describe the general nature of the harassment? (e.g., verbal, physical, etc.)

c. How have you dealt with this situation?

d. If you haven't already done so above, please comment on what formal or informal assistance you may have sought from within or outside the church (regarding your experiences of sexual harassment) and to what extent this assistance was helpful.

e. Were the sexual misconduct guidelines (published in 1996) of help to you in handling this situation? Why or why not?

53. What has been the most surprising thing about being in pastoral ministry?

54. What have you found to give you the most inner strength and priestly authority?

SECTION VIII: ASSOCIATES OR ASSISTANTS

55. Have you ever worked as an associate or assistant minister? 1 Yes 2 No
If no, please proceed to Section IX.

56. What factors influenced your decision to serve as an associate pastor rather than a lead pastor?

57. To what extent was each of the following true of your relationship with the senior minister?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
A. The senior minister and I spent an hour or so each week to discuss the ministry of the congregation.	1	2	3	4
B. The senior minister was critical of my work.	1	2	3	4
C. The senior minister was over protective of me.	1	2	3	4
D. The senior minister did not give me sufficient feedback.	1	2	3	4
E The senior minister gave me good suggestions about how I might improve my preaching, teaching, counseling.	1	2	3	4
F The senior minister felt threatened by me.	1	2	3	4
G The senior minister set the pattern/style of "how to do ministry" not allowing me to utilize my own style.	1	2	3	4

58. For any conflict that occurred between you and the senior minister, how important were each of the following factors?

	Somewhat Important	Important	Unimportant
A Personality, value or style differences.	1	2	3
B Difficulties inherent in being the associate or assistant.	1	2	3
C. Gender differences.	1	2	3

59. What are ways you would like (would have liked) to ask your colleague to support you or work with you more helpfully?

60. Did you feel that the congregation recognized you as a minister in your own right, or did they inappropriately defer to the senior minister for their questions, concerns and needs?

61. In your next assignment would you seek another associate/assistant position?
1 Yes 2 No Why or why not?

62. Have you/did you experience expectations that you should move on to a lead pastorate?
1 Yes 2 No

SECTION IX: SUPPORT

63. Approximately how many clergy do you/did you talk with regularly (once a month) in total? _____

64. Of these, how many are/were women clergy? _____

65. Are you/were you a member of any support/study group(s) of clergy?
1 Yes 2 No

If you are a part of a support/study group, is this group:
1 your denomination only
2 ecumenical
3 primarily another denomination

66. Are you a member of any colleague/professional or interest group composed of only women?
1 Yes 2 No
If yes, is this group composed of: (Circle all that apply)
1 only pastors
2 only laity
3 lay and pastors
4 only of your denomination
5 ecumenical

67. How supportive has your conference minister been in each of the following areas:

	Quite Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Of little Help	Help not asked for or needed
1 Professional or ministerial career concerns	1	2	3	4
2 Problems with/in the congregation	1	2	3	4
3 Personal matters	1	2	3	4
4 Other	1	2	3	4

Please specify:

68. To what extent do you believe your current conference minister is advocating for placing more women in the openings in your conference?
1. A great deal
2. Somewhat, but could do more
3. Very little
4. Not at all

69. Do you meet regularly with a spiritual director/advisor? 1 Yes 2 No

70. If yes, is this person from your denomination? 1 Yes 2 No

71. Do you have a committee within your congregation that functions as a pastoral relations/supervisory group with whom you meet regularly? 1 Yes 2 No 3. Does not apply to me

72. If you answered yes to # 71, are they able to give you honest and realistic feedback, including being helpful in an evaluation process? 1 Yes 2 No

SECTION X: CO-PASTORING WITH SPOUSE

If you have not served as a co-pastor with your spouse, please skip to Section XI.

73. How long were you married before you and your spouse began co-pastoring a congregation?

74. How long have you co-pastored together?

75. Have you co-pastored in more than one setting? 1 Yes 2 No

76. When the congregation called you and your spouse, did you feel they were more interested in your spouse? 1 Yes 1 No

77. Would the congregation have called you without your spouse? 1 Yes 2 No

78. Please describe how you and your spouse divided your time and responsibility.

79. Would you consider your ministerial role as being on an equal level or subordinate level compared to your spouse's role?
    1 Equal level
    2 Subordinate level

80. Are there pastoral roles in which the congregation would not allow you to function? (e.g. preaching) 1 Yes 2 No
    If yes, what are they?

81. Do you and your spouse receive equal salary checks and fringe benefits?
    1 Yes 2 No

    If no, what are the discrepancies in monetary support?

82. How stressful has the co-pastorate been on your marriage?

1	2	3	4	5
Very stressful		Sometimes stressful		Not an issue (No more stressful than if we were in separate occupations)

83. What special challenges does co-pastoring with one's spouse pose?

84. What have been/are the benefits for you, of co-pastoring with one's spouse?

85. When you were/are evaluated how has this evaluation been conducted?
    1 We are evaluated separately
    2 We are evaluated together

86. Please comment on your evaluation experience. (e.g. are there any ways it is more stressful than if you were in a sole pastorate?)

87. Do you consider the co-pastorate with one's spouse a good model for ministry or one that needs to be seriously reconsidered?

88. Would you seek a pastorate on your own (without your spouse)? 1 Yes 2 No
If no, why?

89. If you are no longer co-pastoring with your spouse, what factors contributed to that decision?

SECTION XI: MARRIAGE, CHILDREARING AND PASTORING

90. Marital Status:

1 single (never married)
2 married, living with original spouse
3 widowed
4 widowed and remarried
5 divorced
6 divorced and remarried
7 separated

If not currently married, skip to question # 92

91. How stressful has your ministry been on your marriage?

1	2	3	4	5
Very stressful		Sometimes stressful		Not an issue (No more stressful than if I were in another occupation)

Please explain:

92. Do you have any children? 1 Yes 2 No
If no, please proceed to Section XII.

93. How many children do you have? _____

94. How many of these are under the age of 18? _____

95. Were any of your children under the age of ten while you had a full-time ministerial position?
1 Yes 2 No
If yes, what difficulties did you face in carrying on a full-time ministry when your children were this age? What accommodations did you have to make in order to make this possible?

SECTION XII: MENTORING

96. Have you ever been involved in a mentoring/leadership role with others considering or involved in pastoral ministry? (Circle all that apply)
    a. Yes, with young women considering ministry
    b. Yes, with young men considering ministry
    c. Yes, with older adult women considering ministry
    d. Yes, with older adult men considering ministry
    e. Yes, as a lead pastor to a male associate pastor
    f. Yes, as a lead pastor to a female associate pastor
    g. Yes, to less experienced women pastors (in a role other than lead pastor)
    h. Yes, with less experienced male pastors (in a role other than lead pastor)
    i. No, I have not ever served in a mentoring role

97. Please rate your interest in being involved in these sorts of mentoring/leadership relationships:

	High Interest	Medium Interest	Little to no Interest
a. with young women considering ministry	1	2	3
b. with young men considering ministry	1	2	3
c. with older adult women considering ministry	1	2	3
d. with older adult men considering ministry	1	2	3
e. as a lead pastor to a male associate pastor	1	2	3
f. as a lead pastor to a female associate pastor	1	2	3
g. with less experienced women pastors	1	2	3
h. with less experienced male pastors	1	2	3

98. What do you see as the three major challenges facing women in ministry today?

    1.

    2.

    3.

99. What encouragements can you give to a young woman considering pastoral ministry? What cautions?

100. Past experience with women pastors has indicated that there is a unique oral history which needs to be collected and written down so as not to lose it. On a separate sheet of paper, I invite you to share a story/anecdote that reflects the lighter side of your experience in ministry, a story that is unique to your experience as a woman.

Please return completed surveys using the enclosed stamped envelope to:

Pamela Nath
Bluffton University
1 University Drive
Bluffton, OH 45817

If you have concerns about this survey or would like to talk to someone about any of the issues raised in it, please sign your name and give the telephone numbers where you can be reached. If you prefer that your survey answers remain anonymous, you may return this slip separately to the address above or to Diane Zaerr Brenneman; Congregational and Mnisterial Leadership, Mennonite Church USA; 1061 480th St. SW; Parnell, IA 52325

Name: _____

Telephone Numbers(s): Best times and days to call:

_____ _____

_____ _____